



Fire Program Analysis – Preparedness Module SES Salary Calculation

Issue: How will Senior Executive Service salary values be calculated in FPA PM?

Background and Assumptions:

FPA PM will determine preparedness budget needs for three levels of planning, FPU level, State/Regional level, and National levels. Three pay grade structures are present within the system: General Schedule, Wage Grade, and Senior Executive Service. Senior Executive Service personnel mostly reside at the national level organizations. The system will address rate organizational structures at the national level and will need to refer to SES pay rates. The purpose of this white paper is to address how the system will generate these rates.

The following web site, <http://www.opm.gov/ses/compensation.asp> has a link for Senior Executive Service. Listed in the link is the 2005 Pay Tables for Executive and Senior Level Employees. There are many subcategories but for the purpose of FPA we are only interested in the Senior Executive Service (SES). The description of SES pay is described as follows:

“The former six levels of SES pay established under 5 U.S.C. 5382 (i.e. ES-1 through ES-6) were abolished and replaced by an open pay range. In addition, locality pay is no longer extended to SES members. Under the new pay system, an SES member's rate of basic pay, upon conversion, is the base salary plus the locality pay in effect on the day prior to conversion. The new SES pay range has a minimum rate of basic pay equal to 120 percent of the rate for GS-15, step 1, Executive Schedule. However, for any agency certified under 5 U.S.C. 5307(d) as having a performance appraisal system which, as designed and applied, makes meaningful distinctions based on relative performance, the maximum rate of basic pay will be the rate for level II of the Executive Schedule.”

The actual pay for an SES employee can fall anywhere between a set range. The range for 2005 is \$107,550 to \$162,100. After further discussions with Wally Josephson, FPA Program Coordinator, and Patty Bachtel, SES Pay Specialist for USFS, they both recommended using a single value representing the midpoint of this range for the average annual salary of an SES employee. For 2005, this would be \$134,825.

Locality Pay does not appear to be an issue. The following website, <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2004/sesconvreg.asp> states:

“Under the new SES pay system, individual SES members will no longer receive locality-based comparability payments... We have made conforming amendments in 5 CFR part 531 to reflect the changes made by 5 U.S.C. 5304(h).”

Recommendation:

Maintain a data lookup table with three values. Two values will specify the maximum and minimum pay range for the current year as stated in <http://www.opm.gov/ses/compensation.asp>. This range will take in account the highest and lowest values present in both agencies with, or without, a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System. In addition a midpoint value will be calculated and entered into the data table. The midpoint value will be used to calculate any SES salaries that may be used in the FPA PM system.